



**Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION AND RECREATION**



Governor Charles D. Baker
Lt. Governor Karyn E. Polito
EEA Secretary Matthew A. Beaton
DCR Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez

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DCR Sends Crew of 20 Wildland Firefighters to Help Battle Blazes in Oregon

BOSTON – August 8, 2015, Today, the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) announced that it is sending a crew of 20 wildland firefighters to Oregon to help battle fires that have raged over nearly 263,000 acres across Oregon, Washington and California in the last week. The crew is made up of 10 DCR state firefighters and 10 municipal fire fighters from various towns around the state. The 20 firefighters departed from Erving State Forest in Erving, Massachusetts. They will join with crews from New York and the Mid Atlantic states at a mobilization center in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania before departing for Oregon.

"We are happy to answer the call of Oregon and send these extraordinary public servants to assist in their time of need," **said Governor Charlie Baker.** "Massachusetts is proud of our history of national and international cooperation in battling wildfires that know no borders. On behalf of the entire Commonwealth, I offer my prayers for those impacted and for the safe travel and return of our firefighters."

The deployment is in response to a request DCR Commissioner Sanchez received from the U.S. Forest Service and the Northeastern Interagency Coordination Center in Camden, NH.

"Massachusetts is the home of some of the most talented and well qualified firefighters in our country," **said EEA Secretary Matthew Beaton.** "With little notice, these state and municipal firefighters are answering the call of Oregon and I am confident they will put their extensive training to use in battling these wildfires."

On this assignment, the crews will be initially prepositioned at Redmond Air Center and Smoke Jumper Base in Redmond, Oregon for assignment to one of the 29 fire currently burning out of control in both states. The crew, which is also referred to as a "Type 2 initial attack hand crew," will engage in direct fire suppression, working on the fire line up to 14 days – building fire breaks, securing fire perimeters, containing fires, and protecting structures.

"We are extremely proud of the DCR and municipal firefighters who have been called upon to help our friends and partners in Oregon," **said DCR Commissioner Carol Sanchez.** "These are extremely well-trained and dedicated firefighters whose skills are much needed, and whose help, we know, is enormously appreciated."

Partnering with the U.S. Forest Service and the Northeast Forest Fire Protection Commission, DCR's Bureau of Forest Fire Control has been sending crews since 1985 to fight fires in areas of the western and Rocky Mountain States, Alaska, Florida, Virginia and Quebec.

All firefighters are federally certified for the work, having passed a 40-hour federal wildland firefighting class and physical fitness test. Through the mutual aid agreement of the compact, the requesting state or province pays all expenses of the out-of-state crews, including salary, transportation, lodging, and food.

Massachusetts sent a 20-person crew in 2014 to assist with containment of several lightning caused fires in and around Leavenworth, Washington.

The responding Massachusetts firefighters are as follows:

STATE DCR Firefighters:

Whittier, Gregory	Deerfield
Armstrong, Robert	Conway
Jennell, Benjamim	W. Newbury
Hallinan, Jonathan	Peabody
DiGirolomo, Rebecca*	Worcester
Hoffman, Ryan	Billerica
Liard, Roy	Wakefield
Luongo, David	Sandwich
Nutter-Upham, Cassie	Nashua, NH
Robbins, Keith	Westhampton

Municipal/Private firefighters:

Belanger, Jeffrey	Deerfield
Belote, Alex	Kingston
Branscombe, John	N. Brookfield
Forgea, Bruce	Windsor
Hanecak, Jesse	Whately
Kalweit, Christel	Sandwich
Korby, Charles	Montague
Nolette, George	N. Brookfield
Ward, Ezra	Montague
Renshaw, Christopher	Tolland, CT

*Works for the Division
of Fisheries and Wildlife

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Carol I. Sanchez, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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